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Bulova Byline
Chairman's Monthly Report
February 2010

- Dominating the media throughout January was the heroic work of our Fairfax County Urban Search and Rescue Team (USAR), VATF-1. For those of you receiving this Byline electronically, you received "Late Breaking News" E-Bulletins regularly, beginning with the Team's deployment to Haiti on January 12th, through their heroes' welcome, on January 28th at Dulles Airport, as their plane taxied through a "water arch" salute executed by airport fire trucks. You can watch the arrival by going to: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/emergency/vataskforce1/>.

During their deployment, I heard from many of you about how proud you are of our Fairfax County USAR Team. I made sure they knew of your expressions of pride and appreciation. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors will receive members of VATF-1 at our Board Meeting on February 9th so that they can be officially thanked and recognized for their heroic efforts during the past weeks. A reception will be held in the forum area of the Government Center for Team Members, their friends and family beginning at 8:15 a.m. just prior to the start of our Board Meeting.

When our USAR team is activated, expenses are paid for by USAID, and not county tax dollars. Training, equipment, and personnel costs are paid for by the federal government on a regular basis. The County benefits by having personnel trained in search and rescue operations as a result of this relationship. Additionally, when personnel are deployed, there is no loss in service to Fairfax County residents. Staffing continues around-the-clock for all fire stations and for all fire and medical units. The training and expertise that is gained by partnering with the federal government in times of local, regional, national, and international disasters and emergencies enhances and improves the skills of our firefighters and paramedics. Those skills are passed on to the residents of Fairfax County and surrounding jurisdictions on a daily basis, making Fairfax County a safer and better place to live and work.



- Budget Season officially begins on February 23rd, when County Executive Tony Griffin releases his Advertised Budget. Fairfax County is required by law to have a balanced budget. As we look ahead and prepare for Fiscal Year 2011 we continue to be seriously challenged with a decline in local tax revenue. While the fall of residential values is slowing, we are seeing an 18% decline in commercial values this year. Coupled with rising costs of fuel and retirement, we project a shortfall for Fiscal Year 2011 of \$316 million dollars. Schools – which make up 53.8% of the County’s Budget -- project a shortfall of \$176 million.

Closing this projected shortfall, while continuing to protect the quality of life we value in Fairfax County is our challenge. I will be sure to keep you up-to-date on the budget process through this Byline. You can also find a wealth of information about our budget and the budget process by going to the County’s Website at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/government/budget/>. Public Hearings on the Budget are scheduled for April 6th, 7th and 8th. Additionally, town meetings and forums will be held throughout the county so that you can receive information about what is being proposed and provide feedback to your elected leaders. I’ll provide more specific dates and locations in my next Byline. Addressing this fiscal challenge in a way that is sensitive to our taxpayers, protects critical services, and maintains our quality of life requires a strong partnership between the community and your government leaders. I look forward to working with you to make that happen.

- Woody Allen once said “80% of success in life is showing up.” It is important that we “show up” and are counted in the 2010 Census. The Census is not simply a 220-year-old ritual of our democracy — it serves a very important function for local communities across the nation. The census helps determine political representation, and how billions of dollars in federal money is distributed to local communities.

On January 7th the Fairfax Census office opened on Fairfax Blvd in the City of Fairfax. Fairfax County is assisting in the count effort with a Complete Count Committee that is reaching out to our large and diverse community. See inside this Byline for more information about the Census and make sure you encourage your friends and neighbors to participate in the count!



Sharon Bulova
Chairman, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors

ROAD MAINTENANCE REMINDER

In this winter of unusually heavy snowfall, I wanted to take the opportunity to remind you that here in Virginia, our roads are owned and maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).



From fixing potholes, mowing medians and roadsides, replacing traffic lights, and plowing snow and treating roads for winter weather, you can report these items to VDOT directly by calling 703-383-VDOT (8368) or emailing novainfo@vdot.virginia.gov. Please keep in mind that VDOT works to clear highways and primary roads first then clears secondary streets as they are able. Please use caution when driving on snowy or icy roads, allow yourself more distance to stop and budget more time for travel.

STATE FUNDING FOR OUR SCHOOLS

This past Sunday's edition of the Washington Post published an op-ed article concerning a recent state budget proposal to freeze the local composite index (LCI) for K-12 education. I wrote this letter in collaboration with Prince William County Board of Supervisors Chairman Corey A. Stewart and Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Chairman Scott K. York and wanted to share it with you. You can view online at: http://voices.washingtonpost.com/local-opinions/2010/01/insult_from_richmond.html.



*Insult from Richmond
By Sharon Bulova, Corey
A. Stewart and Scott K.
York*

Education is the silver bullet. Our children are our future. These are things we know intuitively, and in these

uncertain economic times, we must continue to strengthen this foundation to ensure our economic recovery and success in a global marketplace.

As governments at every level face significant budget shortfalls, elected officials are wrestling with difficult decisions and painful cuts. In Northern Virginia, unfortunately, our challenge is exacerbated by a recent state budget proposal to freeze the local composite index (LCI) for K-12 education.

The LCI is the measure used to determine state and local shares of K-12 funding in Virginia. The formula uses data (growth in student population, local income, retail sales and property values) to determine a locality's ability to pay for its schools. It is part of the routine distribution for education funding that occurs every two years. It has been in place for four decades.

Traditionally, the funding formulas disadvantage Northern Virginia, as revenue is redistributed to areas with fewer resources. This year, however, with property values plummeting and school enrollment growing, the formula would actually trigger an improved share of funding for Northern Virginia jurisdictions.

But in his final budget presentation in December, former governor Tim Kaine proposed freezing all Virginia localities at the previous LCI for one year. This move would cost Fairfax, Prince William and Loudoun counties \$118 million. Ironically, localities outside of Northern Virginia, whose comparative wealth increased, would get additional assistance.

Northern Virginia is proud to be the economic engine of the state. We put significant local dollars into K-12 because we know that our first-rate educational system is a key to our quality of life, bringing major Fortune 500 companies to our area, benefiting all. Our residents and businesses understand that maintaining excellence in our schools is a critical component needed to lead us out of this national recession.

A freeze in the LCI is patently arbitrary and an insult to our jurisdictions. We have played by the rules, and this unfair change would pull the rug out from under us at a time when we can afford it least. Gov. Robert F. McDonnell and the General Assembly must not allow this proposal to stand.

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE FORT BELVOIR NEWS

Fort Belvoir publishes a monthly newsletter and regularly sends email notifications regarding its publications, construction activities, and other events. If you would like to be added to one of Fort Belvoir's lists, send your contact information to info@belvoirnewvision.com. For more information, visit: www.belvoirnewvision.com.

UPDATE ON AMTRAK TO BURKE CENTRE

You may remember reading about the newly expanded Amtrak service



between Lynchburg and Union Station in the October issue of the Byline. This expanded service provides a new transportation option for county residents from the Burke Centre VRE Station. Several people were excited to learn about the new service in October but were frustrated with the ticketing process.

I am pleased to report that, as of January 14, service from Burke Centre has improved; Burke Centre has been added to Amtrak's Northeast Regional system and it is now possible to purchase tickets for trains to and from Burke Centre *directly through Amtrak*. By working with Amtrak and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit, we have been able to address the ticketing issues. It now is even easier to travel to Charlottesville, Culpeper, Manassas, Alexandria and even as far north as Boston without transferring trains. For information on train schedules or to purchase tickets, visit www.amtrak.com or call 1-800-USA-RAIL.

SEVEN CORNERS TRANSIT CENTER

At our January 12 meeting, the Board officially endorsed design plans for the proposed Seven Corners Transit Center. This new center will help alleviate problems at the existing bus stop at the Seven Corners Shopping Center. This bus stop currently serves as a transportation hub for more than 2,000 riders each day. The current stop is unable to meet demand, forcing busses to use private parking lots that were not designed to handle such heavy traffic loads.

The plan for the Seven Corners Transit Center will resolve this problem by upgrading existing bus stops in the northwest quadrant of the Seven Corners Shopping Center parking lot, on the south side of Route 50/Arlington Boulevard, between Thorne Road and Patrick Henry Drive in Falls Church, VA. The new center will also include three bus bays with six bus shelters, a bus layover area, and bicycle facilities. The cost of this project is a projected \$1.2 million, funded by the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program. On November 18th, 2009, a Public Hearing was held to discuss the design plans for the center, and the Board will conduct another Public Hearing for the final designs of the project in February. Transit Center construction is expected to begin in July 2010 and will begin operation by January 2011.

FINAL PHASE OF FAIRFAX COUNTY PARKWAY AWARDED FUNDING FOR CONSTRUCTION

In January, Phase III of the Fairfax County Parkway (northern interchange with Rolling Road and Franconia-Springfield Parkway) was awarded funding by the Federal Highway Administration to the Shirley-Dewberry Design-Build Team, using \$23 million in funds awarded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

This represents the final phase of the parkway to be constructed.



With this award, Parkway construction is now underway on all phases. Phases I & II, the primary through lanes and interchange with Rolling Road/FBNA Access Road (now named Barta Road), are expected to be completed in November of this year. Phase IV, the complete Boudinot Drive/Fullerton Road interchange will be completed in August 2011. And the expected completion date for Phase III is July 2012.

NEW HOUSING BLUEPRINT

At our January 26 meeting, the Board of Supervisors approved a new Housing Blueprint to address the challenge of insuring there is accessible, affordable housing for all members of our community. Affordable housing was a key topic when the Board considered our current Fiscal Year 2010 budget and the Board dedicated considerable time to discussing housing issues at our post-budget retreat last June.

At the retreat, we agreed that our housing programs must emphasize serving those with the greatest needs, that affordable housing represents a spectrum of needs, and that we can be most effective in accomplishing these goals by working with Faith Community and non-profit partners in the community.

The Housing Blueprint is a strategy for addressing these priorities and represents a new direction compared to the previous policy of preservation. The new goals stated in the Blueprint are comprehensive: to end homelessness in 10 years, to provide affordable housing options to those with special needs, to cut the waiting lists for affordable housing in half over 10 years, and to produce workforce housing to accommodate projected job growth. The Blueprint is the product of impressive collaboration by county agencies, concerned citizens and local non-profit groups. Because of the metrics it includes, the Blueprint will sets short and long term goals and can be used to evaluate our programs. To view the Housing Blueprint, please visit <http://www.affordable.org/>.

2010 U.S. CENSUS

We are now only a few months away from the 2010 U.S. Census. A complete National Census is only conducted once every ten years. Information gathered through the census helps determine how federal funding is allocated and helps determine the boundaries of legislative representation.

Fairfax County is a large and very diverse jurisdiction. The funding we receive based on census data helps us provide basic needs assistance and other important functions of government. Having accurate data that represents our population is especially vital given the challenges we are currently facing. In Fiscal Year 2008, Fairfax County received over \$359 million in federal funding, or approximately \$940 per household, based on information gathered through the census. Last year, Fairfax County received over \$50 million in federal funds for our public schools based on census data.

Please complete your Census form that you will be receiving April 1 and encourage your friends and family to do so as well!

Our local Census office opened January 7th at 9653 Fairfax Blvd., Fairfax, VA 22031. They are currently hiring census takers starting at \$20.00/hr. Being a census taker is a great opportunity to earn good pay in a temporary, part-time job, and at the same time help your community. Call 703-865-3060 for more information.



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